THE STELLA OF ASTROPHEL

A Portion Of

THE ASTROPHEL ELEGIES

A COLLECTION OF POEMS ON THE DEATH
OF SIR PHILIP SIDNEY
(1595)

A Critical Edition

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF UNIVERSITY STUDIES OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS
UNIVERSITY IN CONFORMITY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
1934

BY
WALTER GEORGE FRIEDRICH

BALTIMORE
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SUMMARY

This dissertation presents a critical edition of the group of poems on the death of Sir Philip Sidney which was included in the 1595 quarto of Spenser's *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*. For the sake of convenience, these poems are called the *Astrophel Elegies* throughout this study. The introduction deals with problems of authorship, date, sources, and interpretation. Spenser is found to be the editor of the collection and the author of the first poem, "Astrophel." The authorship of the "The Dolefull Lay of Clorinda" is generally ascribed to Spenser, but internal and bibliographical evidence is found to be preponderantly in favor of the Countess of Pembroke's authorship. New evidence is presented which definitely ascribes "The Mourning Muse of Thestylis" and "A Pastorall Aeglogue" to Ludowick Bryskett. "An Elegie, or Friends Passion" is probably Sir Walter Raleigh's. The last poem in the collection, "Another of the Same," has been ascribed to Lord Brooke by Charles Lamb, and to Sir Edward Dyer by Edmond Malone, but there is no evidence to indicate the authorship of the poem. The probable date of composition of all the poems except "Astrophel" is found to be 1587, but the evidence indicates that Spenser probably wrote "Astrophel" between the fall of 1589 and the end of 1591.

The section on sources reprints Bernardo Tasso's "Selva nella morte del Signor Aluigi da Gonzaga" and "Alcippo," which are not easily accessible, and presents original translations of these poems. The character and extent of Bryskett's borrowings from Tasso is indicated.

The section on interpretation deals with the problem of the identification of the Stella of the poems. In order to study this problem, it was necessary to study also the problem of the identification of the Stella of Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*. (This section of the dissertation, condensed in part, but expanded by the discussion of various studies that have appeared since the dissertation was accepted, is presented in the accompanying monograph.) The problem of the personal relationship between Spenser and Sidney is also studied on the basis of contemporary evidence. The conclusion reached is that the friendship between Sidney and Spenser had become so close

that, when Spenser was planning to go to Ireland, Sidney suggested that the two men keep up a correspondence; but that the development of a more intimate friendship was halted by Spenser's departure.

The text of the poems, which follows, is based upon an independent study of the quarto and the folio. The textual notes give the variants in these and other editions. The commentary, which completes the dissertation, consists of variorum notes and new annotation.

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THE STELLA OF ASTROPHEL

By Walter G. Friedrich

Every student of English literature is familiar with the traditional interpretation of Sir Philip Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella.* That sonnet-sequence, we are told, celebrates Sidney's love for Lady Penelope Rich, née Devereux. Critics disagree on whether Sidney's love for Penelope was real or merely literary, and those who consider it real disagree on whether it was passionate or merely Platonic. But, almost unanimously, they agree that the Stella of Sidney's sonnet-sequence is Penelope Rich. And, since the *Astrophel Elegies,*[1] too, refer to Sidney as Astrophel, and since they, too, celebrate a Stella as Sidney's love, modern critics have generally agreed that this Stella, too, is Lady Rich.

This identification has led many scholars to use the *Astrophel Elegies* as a key to the *Astrophel and Stella* sonnet-sequence. Grosart, for example, sees in lines 61 to 66 of *Astrophel* evidence that Sidney's love for Penelope was passionate and that "Spenser saw nothing but glory in the passionate story. . . ." "'Platonic,'" he says, "is about the most inept and false description of the 'passion' one could conceive. It was, I believe, a tragedy of Conflict, and the Love went down to the very roots of both in their deepest."[2]

Sidney Lee, on the other hand, finds in the *Elegies* evidence for conclusions exactly opposite to those of Grosart. He points out that the "imitative quality" that is visible throughout Sidney's sonnet-sequence "destroys most of those specious pretensions to autobiographic confessions which the unwary reader may discern in them."[3] External evidence for this Mr. Lee finds in the *Elegies.* He says:

[1] This term is used throughout this paper to designate the group of elegies on Sidney included in the 1595 edition of *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe.*

[2] Alexander B. Grosart, ed. *The Complete Poems of Sir Philip Sidney,* London, 1877, 1, pp. lxvi-lxvii.

[3] Sidney Lee, *Elizabethan Sonnets,* Westminster, 1904, 1, p. xliii. In the introduction of his volume, Lee discusses at length the sources of the various *Astrophel*

Sidney's poetic worship of Stella became a conventional theme in Elizabethan poetry, and enjoyed a popularity only second to that of Petrarch's poetic worship of Laura. The *locus classicus* for its treatment is the collection of elegies, entitled *Astrophel*, to which Spenser was the chief contributor. That volume was dedicated to Sidney's widow, and his sister, the Countess of Pembroke, wrote a poem for it. Throughout the work, Sidney's celebration of Stella is accounted his most glorious achievement in literature. The dedication of *Astrophel* to Sidney's wife deprives of serious autobiographical significance his description in the sonnets of his pursuit of Stella's affections.[4]

Professor Jefferson B. Fletcher also looks to the *Elegies* for external evidence concerning the interpretation of the story told in *Astrophel and Stella*, but the evidence he finds causes him to disagree with both Grosart and Lee. The *Elegies* show, Mr. Fletcher insists, that Sidney's love for Lady Rich was neither passionate nor literary; it was Platonic. To make his position clear, I quote the pertinent sections of his twelve-page article:

To begin with, Spenser's dedication was distinctly less to the widow of the dead Sidney than to the wife of the living Essex. The elegy, whenever written, was published in 1595, when Spenser was assiduously courting the patronage of Essex, just victorious at Cadiz, and now reigning favorite. Assuredly, Spenser would have taken no chances of wounding Lady Essex's sensibilities; . . . I doubt if an Englishwoman would have welcomed even in those more " spacious days " the frank celebration of her late husband's infidelity, and her rival's triumph. Be that as it may, the apparently unregarded thing is that Spenser implies no marital infidelity, raises no question of real rivalry. Here is the gist of his indictment:

> Stella the faire, the fairest star in skie,
> As faire as Venus or the fairest faire,
> (A fairer star saw neuer liuing eie)
> Shot her sharp pointed beames through purest aire.
> Her he did love, her he alone did honor,
> His thoughts, his rimes, his songs were all upon her.
>
> To her he vowd the service of his daies,
> On her he spent the riches of his wit;

and Stella sonnets and shows how deeply Sidney is indebted to Petrarch and the Petrarchists of France and Italy.

[4] *Ibid.*, footnote.

For her he made hymnes of immortall praise,
Of onely her he sung, he thought, he writ. . . .[5]

Ne her with ydle words alone he wowed,
And verses vaine (yet verses are not vaine)
But with brave deeds to her sole service vowed,
And bold atchievements her did entertaine.

Undoubtedly, Spenser says that Astrophel did love Stella—but *how?* was there not a manner of loving recognized at that time as capable of sincerity, even of fervency, and yet not in wedlock, and still not illicit? . . . I mean platonic love. . . .

Now in the light of this quintessential doctrine, Spenser's account of Astrophel's "pursuit" of Stella becomes quite different from the vulgar *liaison*. . . . Spenser's opening figure, the likening of Stella's influence to "beames" "shot" from "fairest star in skie," recalls the most exquisite epitome of platonic love. . . . The rest is the declaration of Sidney's "service" with "honor," in phrases virtually identical with Spenser's own utterance of Platonism in his *Hymne to Love* (especially vss. 204-24). And in conformity with this interpretation of Spenser's elegy is the testimony of Matthew Royden in the same series of elegies, that

Above all others this (Sidney) is hee
Which erst approoved in his song,
That love and honour might agree
And that pure love will do no wrong.

Spenser and Royden, at least, read Astrophel and Stella as an expression ultimately of pure platonic love, and so acclaimed it. Such love was acceptedly licit toward a married woman; indeed, in theory, it was most fitly so directed; since the platonic, like the chivalric, love theorists held that their union of pure spirit was incompatible with the grosser union of matrimony, especially as for the noble class primarily concerned marriage was so largely a matter "of convenience." There was accordingly no theoretically valid reason for Lady Sidney to be jealous of Stella, or for Lord Rich to be jealous of Astrophel, though Sidney once or twice seems to imply that he was (cf. xxiv, xxvii, lxxviii).[6]

We have seen how three entirely different interpretations of

[5] It is interesting to note that Mr. Fletcher here omits two lines which argue against his position, i.e., lines 59-60:

Her and but her, of loue he worthie deemed,
For all the rest but litle he esteemed.

Does Mr. Fletcher believe that these lines raise "no question of real rivalry" if Stella is Lady Rich?

[6] Jefferson B. Fletcher, "Did 'Astrophel' love 'Stella'?" *Modern Philology* 5 (1907-8). 255-258.

Astrophel and Stella have been made on the basis of the *Astrophel Elegies*. All the scholars quoted above have taken for granted that the Stella of the elegies is Lady Rich.

Doubt is cast upon the traditional identification of the Stella of the *Astrophel Elegies*, however, in Professor Renwick's new edition of Spenser. Renwick says:

> *Astrophel* presents a curious problem of manners. It celebrates not only the death of Sir Philip Sidney, but his love for "Stella," a love which Spenser represents as returned. According to all the traditions Stella was Penelope Devereux, Lady Rich; but the poem is dedicated to Sidney's widow. That Lady Rich did not return the love of Sidney, and that Lady Sidney had already married the second Earl of Essex, Lady Rich's brother, is but the way of the world, which any poet is at liberty to ignore, but no woman could be expected to appreciate the compliment of a dedication which places her before the world in such a position. Either Spenser tacitly puts Lady Sidney into the place of Stella; or the gossip that connected Sidney with Lady Rich is much exaggerated; or it was understood that Sidney's love for Lady Rich was a purely literary *amour courtois* in which there was neither sin nor embarrassment for anyone. A mediaeval affair of this kind would be quite in Sidney's character, and would be recognized as picturesque though antiquated. On any other assumption than one of these the dedication of this poem to the Countess of Essex would be, to say the least, tactless: one might expect it from Shelley, but scarcely from Spenser.[7]

Professor Renwick merely casts doubt upon the traditional identification of the Stella of the *Elegies*. But the entire traditional *Astrophel and Stella* story has recently been attacked. Professor J. M. Purcell brushes the tale aside with one sentence:

> The Philip Sidney-Penelope Rich has no basis in any contemporary record, but is the recollection of the confused mind of a man writing a hundred years after Sidney's death (This record is a letter by D. Tyndale dated Feb. 18, 1686/7, in Aubrey's *Brief Lives, II*, 251).[8]

Professor Hoyt H. Hudson has, however, taken issue with Mr. Purcell and has attempted to show that "it [was] thought

[7] W. L. Renwick, ed. *Daphnaida and other Poems*, London, 1929, p. 191.

[8] *PMLA* 46 (1931). 945. (The article is without title.) Mr. Purcell has since developed this thesis in his *Sidney's Stella*, N. Y. and London, 1934.

by intelligent readers of *Astrophel and Stella* and by Sidney's own family and friends, that Stella was Penelope, Lady Rich," and to offer "proof that the readers to whom I refer had ground for the identification they made. . . ."[9]

To summarize:

1. The Stella of the *Astrophel Elegies* has been identified as the Stella of the *Astrophel and Stella* on the basis of the name only, without further investigation.
2. As a result of this, the *Astrophel and Stella* sonnet-sequence has been variously interpreted on the basis of the *Astrophel Elegies.*
3. The *Astrophel Elegies* have, in turn, been interpreted on the basis of the interpretations of *Astrophel and Stella.*
4. Doubt has recently been cast upon the identification of the Stella of the *Astrophel Elegies* as Lady Rich.
5. The entire traditional interpretation of *Astrophel and Stella* has recently been attacked as "the recollection of the confused mind of a man writing a hundred years after Sidney's death," which "has no basis in any contemporary record."
6. The most recent study of the subject defends the traditional identification of Stella as Lady Rich.

It is the purpose of this study to attempt to bring some order out of this chaos by showing:

1. That there is no external evidence for the identification of the Stella of *Astrophel and Stella* as Penelope Rich.
2. That the Stella of the *Astrophel Elegies* is not Lady Rich.
3. That, according to the available evidence, Sidney's contemporaries did not identify Stella as Lady Rich until after the publication of the 1598 *Arcadia*; and that their identification was apparently made on the basis of the same evidence used for the identification

[9] "Penelope Devereux as Sidney's Stella," *Huntington Library Bulletin* No. 7 (April 1935), p. 90.

ever since, i. e., an interpretation of Sonnet 37 of *Astrophel and Stella* and a misinterpretation of the *Astrophel Elegies.*

I

In view of the long narratives we now have about the Philip Sidney-Penelope Rich affair,[10] it is rather surprising to find that we have only one contemporary reference to any relations whatever between Sir Philip and Lady Penelope. Many biographies, to be sure, tell us that when Walter Devereux, the first Earl of Essex, was dying,

> . . . The same daie talkinge of manye of his Frendes he spake of Mr. Phillipp Sidney. O that good gentleman have me comended unto him, and tell him I sende him nothinge, but I wishe him well, and so well that if God so move both theire hartes I wyshe that he might matche with my Daughter. I call him sonne, so wyse, vertuous and godlye. . . .

This speech is, however, from a source which makes it practically valueless as evidence. It occurs in an account prefixed to Thomas Hearne's edition of Camden's *Annals* (1717).[11] The account "is supposed to have been written by Edward Waterhouse," but there is no way of determining its authenticity. Even if it were to be admitted as evidence, however, the words "if God so move both theire hartes I wyshe that he might matche with my Daughter" would show that there was no bond of love between the young people at that time. The only contemporary reference we have to any relations between Sidney and Penelope is in a letter written by Edward Waterhouse to Sir Henry Sidney on November 14, 1576, not quite two months after Essex's death. After discussing the favor with which the young Earl of Essex is being received at the Court, Waterhouse writes:

[10] See, for example, Alfred Pollard, *Sir Philip Sidney's Astrophel and Stella,* London, 1888; Ernest Rhys, *The Lyric Poems of Sir Philip Sidney,* London, 1895; M. W. Wallace, *The Life of Sir Philip Sidney,* Cambridge U. P., 1915; Mona Wilson, *Sir Philip Sidney,* London, 1931.

[11] P. xciii. I have not had access to Hearne, and I give the passage as quoted by Hudson (*op. cit.,* p. 91). Hudson says a copy of this account occurs in Ellesmere MS 34/C/5, an undated sixteenth-century MS now in the Huntington Library. He call this account "a love story" (p. 90).

And all thes Lords that wishe well to the Children, and, I suppose, all the best Sort of the *Englishe* Lords besides, doe expect what will become of the Treaty betwene Mr. *Phillip*, and my Lady *Penelope*. Truly, my Lord, I must saie to your Lordship, as I have said to my Lord of *Lecester*, and Mr. *Phillip*, the Breaking of from this Match, if the Default be on your Parts, will turne to more Dishonour, then can be repaired with eny other Mariage in *England*. And, I protest unto your Lordship, I do not think that their is at this Day so strong a Man in *England* of Freinds, as the litell Erle of *Essex*, nor eny Man more lamented then his Father, since the Deth of King *Edward*.[12]

This letter certainly implies that Sir Henry Sidney, Philip, and Leicester were thinking of breaking off whatever understanding there was concerning a marriage between Sidney and Penelope. Waterhouse has found it necssary to warn all three men against the action they were contemplating. Hence our only bit of contemporary evidence concerning the relations between Philip and Penelope indicates that Philip was trying to break whatever " treaty " his elders had made for him with Penelope.

That Sidney considered himself foot-loose and fancy-free less than a year later is shown by the correspondence between him and Languet from June 14, 1577 to March 10, 1578.[13] These letters are full of veiled references to a proposal made by Languet to Sidney " at the mouth of the Main," apparently a proposal concerning a marriage between Sidney and a princess.

Mr. M. W. Wallace[14] has recently found the clue to these rather enigmatic letters in a passage from the report of the Spanish ambassador, Bernardino de Mendoza, dated April 12, 1578:

There is much talk here of a marriage between Philip Sidney, Leicester's nephew, the heir of Henry Sidney, of the earl of Warwick, and of Leicester's property, and a sister of Orange, who enters very willingly into the suggestion, and promises a dowry to make him lord of Holland and Zealand, by this means and

[12] Arthur Collins, *Letters and Memorials of State, etc. . . . by Sir Henry Sydney, etc.*, London, 1746, 1 (second part). 147.

[13] Cf. W. A. Bradley, *The Correspondence of Philip Sidney and Hubert Languet*, Boston, 1912.

[14] *Op. cit.*, p. 187.

other gifts gaining over Leicester, who has now turned his back upon France, to which he was formerly so much attached.[15]

In other words, the little evidence we have for Sidney's interest in women during these years shows that he was interested in arranging a marriage with the sister of his friend, Prince William of Orange. There is not a shred of evidence to indicate that he was even interested in Penelope Devereux.

But most biographers admit that Philip was not interested in her until she had become engaged to Lord Rich, that is, some time after March, 1581. Mr. J. A. Symonds, for instance, says:

> My theory of the love which it [*Astrophel and Stella*] portrays, is that this was latent up to the time of her betrothal, and that the consciousness of the irrevocable at that moment made it break into the kind of regretful passion which is peculiarly suited for poetic treatment.[16]

We have no evidence to indicate, however, that Sidney's contemporaries regarded Lady Rich as his mistress, real or literary. The earliest suggestion that Sidney is celebrating his own mistress in the person of one of his literary heroines is made in the *Arte of English Poesie,* published in 1589.[17] According to Dr. F. Brie, the *Arte* indicates that Sidney's contemporaries recognized Penelope Rich in both the Philoclea of the *Arcadia* and the Stella of *Astrophel and Stella.* Mr. Brie says:

> Die Kreise des Hofes, in denen Sidney verkehrte, waren sicher imstande, eine Reihe der Figuren in der Arcadia zu identifizieren, schon darum, weil es Sidney gar nicht darauf ankam, die Gestalten zu verschleiern, ebensowenig wie in „Astrophel and Stella," wo jedermann die Anspiegelungen auf Penelope Rich und deren Gatten herauserkennen musste. Schon zu Lebzeiten Sidneys scheint man sich denn auch in den Kreisen des Hofes darüber einig gewesen zu sein, dass unter Philoclea so gut wie unter Stella Penelope Rich

[15] *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish (1568-1579)*, ed. M. A. S. Hume, London, 1894, pp. 575-576.

[16] J. A. Symonds, *Sir Philip Sydney,* New York, 1887, p. 112. Cf. also Wilson, *op. cit.,* p. 181.

[17] Although the *Arte of Poesie* was published in 1589, it is thought to have been written between 1584 and 1588. The passages referring to Sidney speak of him as of a living person, and Brie is probably right in assuming that they were written before Sidney's death (Oct. 17, 1586).

verborgen sei. Das geht schon aus der Art hervor, wie Puttenham in seiner *Arte Of English Poesie* diese Gleichung als etwas völlig Selbstverständliches ansetzt.[18]

Mr. Brie then quotes a sentence from the *Arte* as evidence: "Sir Philip Sidney in the description of his mistresse excellently well handled this figure of resemblaunce by imagerie, as ye may see in his booke of *Archadia*."

But Mr. Brie is performing sleight-of-hand here. There is nothing to indicate that the author of the *Arte* recognized Penelope in either Stella or any of the characters of the *Arcadia*. He is writing "Of Ornament"; in a section on "Icon or Resemblaunce by imagerie," he says:

> And this maner of resemblaunce is not onely performed by likening of liuely creatures to one another, but also of any other naturall thing, bearing a proportion of similitude, as to liken yealow to gold, white to siluer, red to the rose, soft to silke, hard to the stone and such like. Sir *Philip Sidney* in the description of his mistresse excellently well handled this figure of resemblaunce by imagerie, as ye may see in his booke of *Archadia*. . . .[19]

The author of the *Arte* does take for granted that the love poems in the *Arcadia* celebrate a mistress; love poems usually do that. He does not even hint, however, that he is referring to anything but a literary mistress; and he certainly does not imply that the mistress is Penelope Rich, as Brie would lead us to believe. As a matter of fact, we have evidence that Sidney's contemporaries regarded the *Arcadia* as pleasant fiction, and not as autobiography. For Stowe, who praises the *Arcadia* very highly in *Holinshed's Chronicles* for 1586, nevertheless calls it "a meere fansie, toie, and fiction."[20]

Astrophel and Stella was interpreted by contemporaries in much the same way as was the *Arcadia*. The first interpretation we have of the sonnet-sequence is in the dedicatory letter which Thomas Newman prefixed to the first edition[21] of *Astrophel and Stella*. The letter follows:

[18] Friedrich Brie, *Sidneys Arcadia* (*Quellen und Forschungen* 124), Strassburg, 1918, p. 264.

[19] George Puttenham (?), *The Arte of Englishe Poesie* (*Arber English Reprints*), London, 1869, pp. 250-251.

[20] *Holinshed's Chronicles*, London, 1808, 4. 880. Stowe tells us on the same page that this was written before Sidney's death.

[21] For a discussion of this and other early editions, cf. Grosart, *op. cit.*, pp. xxx ff.

To the worshipfull and his very good Freende, Ma. Frauncis Flower Esquire, increase of all content.

It was my fortune (right worshipfull) not many daies since, to light vpon the famous deuice of *Astrophel and Stella,* which carrying the generall commendation of all men of iudgment, and being reported to be one of the rarest things that euer any Englishman set abroach, I haue thought good to publish it vnder your name, both for I know the excellencie of your worships conceipt, aboue all other to be such, as is onely fit to discerne of all matters of wit, as also for the credite and countenaunce your patronage may give to such a worke. Accept of it, I beseech you, as the first fruites of my affection, which desires to approoue it selfe in all dutie vnto you: and though the Argument perhaps may seem to light for your graue viewe, yet considering the worthines of the Author, I hope you will entertaine it accordingly. For my part, I haue beene very carefull in the Printing of it, and where as being spred abroade in written Coppies, it had gathered much corruption by ill Writers: I haue vsed their helpe and aduice in correcting and restoring it to his first dignitie, that I knowe were of skill and experience in those matters. And the rather was I moued to sette it forth, because I thought it pittie anie thing proceeding from so rare a man, shoulde bee obscured, or that his fame should not still be nourisht in his works, whom the works with one vnited griefe bewailed. Thus crauing pardon for my bold attempt, and desiring the continuance of your worshippes fauour vnto mee, I ende. Your alwaies to be commaunded, *Tho: Newman.*[22]

This dedicatory letter is important, for it shows:

1. That Newman published *Astrophel and Stella* on his initiative and not for Sidney's relatives or literary executors; hence these relatives and friends certainly did not arrange for the omission of any of the sonnets.
2. That before the date of publication, the sonnet-sequence had been circulating in manuscripts by various hands; hence it must have been fairly well-known.
3. That Newman considered *Astrophel and Stella* a conventional cycle of love-sonnets and not a poetic autobiography; he thought "the Argument perhaps may seem too light for your graue viewe."

That Newman's interpretation of the sonnets was the general one is shown in a letter by Thomas Nash, evidently the

[22] A. Feuillerat, ed. *Complete works of Sir Philip Sidney,* 1922-1926, 2. 369.

editor of the edition, which follows Newman's dedicatory letter. Nash asks the reader to

> turn aside into this Theater of pleasure, for here you shal find a paper stage streud with pearle, an artificial heau'n to ouershadow the faire frame, & christal wals to encounter your curious eyes, whiles the tragicommody of loue is performed by starlight. The chiefe Actor here is *Melpomene,* whose dusky robes dipt in the ynke of teares, as yet seeme to drop when I view them neere. The argument cruell chastitie, the Prologue hope, the Epilogue dispaire, *videte queso et linguis animisque favete.* And here peraduenture, my witles youth may be taxt with a margent note of presumption, for offering to put vp any motion of applause in the behalfe of so excellent a Poet, . . . yet those that obserue how iewels oftētimes com to their hands that know not their value, . . . I hope wil also hold me excused, though I open the gate to his glory, & inuite idle eares to the admiration of his melancholy.[23]

This passage clearly shows how Sidney's contemporaries interpreted *Astrophel and Stella.* To them it was, as Nash puts it, a " Theater of pleasure " with " a paper stage streud with pearle, an artificial heau'n " and " christal wals." The story of the sonnets was " the tragicommody of loue . . . performed by starlight." Of this tragi-comedy, " the argument [is] cruell chastitie, the Prologue hope, the Epilogue dispaire." In other words, Nash considers *Astrophel and Stella* a conventional cycle of love-sonnets with the usual cruel mistress and despairing lover. Like the *Arcadia,* the sonnets are thought to be " a meere fansie, toie, and fiction." There is nothing to show that Nash or any other contemporary of Sidney's saw any autobiographical significance in the poems. Neither is there even a hint that Stella was considered Lady Rich.

Mr. Hudson, to be sure, believes to find evidence for the identification of Stella as Lady Rich in the works of John Harington (1591) Richard Barnfield (1594), and Gervase Markham (1597). I do not believe, however, that any unbiased reader can accept any of this evidence as valid. The evidence which Mr. Hudson presents from Harington consists of the following well-known passage from the notes to Book 16 of the 1591 edition of Harington's translation of *Orlando Furioso.*

[23] *Ibid.* 2. 369-370.

. . . To which purpose all that haue written of this common place of loue, and chiefly Petrarke in his infinite sonets, in the midst of all his lamentation, still had this comfort, that his loue was placed on a worthie Ladie: and our English *Petrarke, Sir Philip Sidney,* or (as *Sir Walter Raulegh* in his Epitaph worthely calleth him) the *Scipio* and the *Petrarke* of our time, often comforteth him selfe in his sonets of *Stella,* though dispairing to attaine his desire, and (though that tyrant honor still refused) yet the nobilitie, the beautie, the worth, the graciousnesse, and those her other perfections, as made him both count her, and call her inestimably rich, makes him in the midst of those his mones, reioyce euen in his owne greatest losses, . . .

Of this passage Mr. Hudson says:

Harington was an epigrammatist and knew how to introduce a pun subtly. Who can doubt that in this passage, which comes to a climax in the word " rich," he is apprising the informed world that he is in on the secret? [24]

Now I submit that what Harington is really saying is that the despairing lover who comforts himself with thoughts of the worthiness of his lady is a commonplace found in Sidney and other writers of love poems. Surely Mr. Hudson's interpretation of the word " rich " in the passage is too far-fetched to be counted as evidence.

Mr. Hudson next discusses Richard Barnfield's *The Affectionate Shepheard,* which was published anonymously in 1594. Mr. Purcell has already refuted the suggestion that the relations of Lady Rich (Guendolena), Lord Mountjoy (Ganymede), Lord Rich (the old man), and Sidney (the dead youth) are discussed in this poem. Mr. Hudson admits that " we cannot settle whether or how far Barnfield intended the sketch of the four characters to be read as personal allegory," but he points out that Barnfield's readers apparently put some construction upon his work which caused scandal, for in his next book, *Cynthia* (1595), Barnfield tells his " curteous Gentlemen Readers ":

. . . Some there were, that did interpret *The affectionate Shepheard,* otherwise then (in truth) I ment, touching the subject thereof: to wit, the loue of a Shepheard to a boy; a fault, the which I will not excuse, because I neuer made. Onely this, I will

[24] *Op. cit.,* p. 93.

vnshaddow my conceipt: being nothing else, but an imitation of *Virgill,* in y^e^ second Eglogue of *Alexis.*[25]

Hudson implies that this may mean that the readers had interpreted *The Affectionate Shepheard* as an allegory of the Sidney-Rich affair. If I understand Barnfield, he is merely saying that his purpose was not to celebrate homosexual love, as some readers had thought, but to imitate " Virgill, in y^e^ second Eglogue of *Alexis.*"

Mr. Hudson further points out that *The Affectionate Shepheard* was dedicated to Lady Rich and that the second poem in the volume, " The Shepheards Content," pays a tribute to Sidney and calls him Astrophel. Mr. Hudson seems to think that " the association of Lady Rich's name [in the dedication] with tributes to Sidney [in the poem], and with tributes to him not only as hero but also as Astrophel " is evidence that Barnfield identified the Stella of Sidney's poems as Lady Rich. Surely that is not valid evidence.

Mr. Hudson presents also Gervase Markham's *Deuoreux. Vertues teares for the losse . . . of King Henry. . . . and the vntimely death, of . . . Walter Deuoreux* (1597). This work is addressed to Lady Rich and her sister, Dorothy, Countess of Northumberland. In the dedicatory epistle Markham, addressing the two ladies, says:

> It was when I receiued it, exceeding rich in French imbroderie, and if nowe, either by my want or dulnes, it seeme patch'd, or too homely: with the beames of your gracious eyes, (most rare creatures) shine vpon it, and then the worst of my penns earthines doubtlesse shall be stellified.[26]

Now in the *Hous of Fame* (1001-2), Chaucer relates

> How goddes gonne stellifye
> Brid, fish, beste, or him or here,

and the *NED* shows that *stellify* was used by many other writers before Markham in the same sense. Surely Markham is merely indicating the god-like qualities of his patronesses. Fortunately Mr. Hudson does not insist upon the word. It is Stanza 18 of the poem which he presents as his real evidence for the identification of Lady Rich as Stella:

[25] Quoted by Hudson, *op. cit.,* p. 94. [26] Quoted by Hudson, *op. cit.,* p. 96.

Heare mee, ô holy ones, and helpe my stile,
Glorious adopted fayre *Northumberland,*
And thou rich *Rich,* richest did ere compile,
Th' onely history shall eternall stand
When ruine els shall all records defile,
And burne out mem'ry with Obliuions brand;
Ayde you those Muses that should ayde my pen,
For you'r ador'd of Muses, Gods, and men.[27]

In his discussion of this stanza, Mr. Hudson says:

It should be noted . . . that "compile" was used in this period in the sense of "make up" or "furnish material for," and that "ere" was used to mean "recently" or "a little while ago." Hence what Markham says, when he addresses Penelope Rich, is that a little while ago she furnished material for the only history that shall be everlasting. He may have had in mind the *Arcadia* as well as *Astrophel and Stella.* But if this is not an allusion to Sidney's writing about Penelope, then I can find no meaning at all in it—unless someone can show that Penelope was at this time engaged in "compiling" some great and lasting work of her own.[28]

The stanza certainly is not a masterpiece of clarity, but I do not believe that it can be accepted as an allusion to Sidney's writing about Penelope. Certainly no unbiased reader can accept it as evidence for the identification of Stella as Lady Rich.[29]

We have seen that there is no external evidence to indicate that, during his lifetime, his contemporaries considered Sidney a lover of Penelope in any sense of the word. We are told, however, that the evidence for Sidney's relations to Stella is to be found in the *Astrophel and Stella* sonnets themselves. Why then was this evidence not apparent to the readers of 1591? The answer is that the sonnet which modern commentators consider the key to the whole sonnet-sequence, i. e. Sonnet 37, was not in the version printed in the first edition. Nor was it in two subsequent editions printed in 1591.[30] The only sonnets in these editions which can by any stretch of the

[27] Quoted by Hudson, *op. cit.,* p. 96.

[28] *Ibid.,* p. 97.

[29] Incidentally, I believe Mr. Hudson misinterprets the line "And thou rich *Rich,* richest did ere compile. . . ." In the first half of the line, Markham piles one "rich" upon the other, and so he adds the parenthetical expression "richest did ere compile," i. e., "riches did ever pile up."

[30] Cf. Feuillerat, *op. cit.,* 2. 299.

imagination be considered allusions to Stella's real name are Sonnets 24 and 35.[31]

Let us examine these sonnets. I give the text of the first edition.[32]

Sonnet 24

RIch fooles there be, whose base and filthy hart,
Lyes hatching still the goods wherein they flow:
Damning themselves to *Tantalus* his smart,
Welth breeding want, more rich, more wretched grow.
Yet to those fooles, heaven doth such wit impart,
As what their hands doe hold, their heads doe know.
And knowing love, and loving lay apart,
As scattered things, farre from all dangers show.
But that rich foole, whom by blinde Fortunes lot,
The richest gem of love and life enjoyes,
And can with foule abuse such beauties blot:
Let him deprived of sweet, but unfelt joyes
Exilde for aye, from those high treasures which
He knowes not grow, in onely follie rich.

The *obvious* meaning of the sonnet is that plenty makes men poor even in love. Only by accepting the conventional stories of Sidney's love for Penelope and of Lord Rich's abuse of his wife can we see in the sonnet praise for Penelope and scorn for her husband. And we have nothing to indicate that the public of 1591 knew that story.

Let us now examine Sonnet 35.

WHat may words say? or what may words not say,
Where truth it selfe must speake like flattery?
Within what boundes can one his lyking stay,
Where Nature doth with excellence agree?
What *Nestors* counsell can my flames allay,
Since Reasons selfe doth blow the coles to me?
And ah, what hope that hope should once see day,
Where *Cupid* is sworne page to Chastitie;
Honour is honoured, that thou dost possesse
Him as thy slave, and now long needie Fame
Doth even grow rich, meaning my *Stellas* name;
Wit learnes in *thee* perfection to expresse,
Not *thou* by praise, but praise in *thee* is raised,
It is a praise, to praise where *thou* are praysed.

[31] It is interesting to note that both these sonnets are omitted in the two sixteenth-century MSS, the Bright MS and the Briton MS, of *Astrophel and Stella*.

[32] As given by Feuillerat, *op. cit.*

To the modern reader the phrase " rich, meaning my Stella's name " looks like a very obvious pun on Penelope's family name. But if it was meant as a pun, it was not nearly so obvious to the Elizabethan reader as one might think. The context clearly shows that the word " meaning " is not used in the modern sense, but in the sense of " declaring," " setting forth." [33] That the word was understood in that way is indicated by the fact that the reading of the 1598 edition is " naming my Stella's name." Sidney uses the word " mean " in that sense in Sonnet 28 when he writes, " When I see *Stella,* I doe meane the same Princesse of beautie," etc.[34] Putting the pertinent lines of Sonnet 35 into modern English, they read: " and now long-needy Fame Doth even grow rich setting forth my Stella's name." These lines in themselves certainly would not lead the reader to believe that Sidney was trying to identify Stella as Lady Rich.

The sonnet which does clearly indicate that, in it at least, Sidney is referring to Lady Rich is the one known to us as Sonnet 37 of *Astrophel and Stella*:

> My mouth doth water, and my breast doth swell,
> My tongue doth itch, my thoughts in labour be:
> Listen then Lordings with good eare to me,
> For of my life I must a riddle tell.
> Towards *Auroras* Court a Nymph doth dwell,
> Rich in all beauties which mans eye can see:
> Beauties so farre from reach of words, that we
> Abase her praise, saying she doth excell:
> Rich in the treasure of deserv'd renowne,
> Rich in the riches of a royall hart,
> Rich in those gifts which give th'eternall crowne;
> Who though most rich in these and everie part,
> Which make the patents of true wordly blisse,
> Hath no misfortune, but that Rich she is.

This sonnet was not included in *Astrophel and Stella* until 1598, when the sonnet-sequence was included in the folio edition of Sidney's works. This folio, which had the general title *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia,* was published under the

[33] Cf. note by Grosart, *op. cit.* 1. 52.

[34] Some modern editors, finding this line unintelligible, change the " see " which they consider a typographical error, to " say." The context, however, supports my interpretation.

supervision of Sidney's sister.[35] Just why the sonnet did not appear in the earlier editions can only be conjectured. Perhaps the "riddle," as Sidney calls it, was entrusted only to the poet's sister. Perhaps it was never meant to be part of *Astrophel and Stella*. But be that as it may, it is certain that the easily-solved riddle did not appear in the editions before 1598. That indicates that it was not in the manuscripts used by the editors of those editions. Both the Bright MS and the Briton MS omit this sonnet. Certainly, Sonnet 37 was unknown to the public before 1598.

We have, then, no reason for believing that Sidney's contemporaries saw any relation between Stella and Lady Rich before 1598. "That *Astrophel and Stella* is imitative in some of its poems, conventional in others, and illustrative of the theories of Neo-Platonism throughout is beyond question,"[36] and we have no reason to believe that the poems were regarded as anything but a brilliant though conventional sequence of love-sonnets before Sonnet 37 was published.

Just when the various sonnets were written we do not know. Those that refer to Lady Rich must, of course, have been written after March, 1581, for Penelope was not betrothed to Lord Rich before then.[37] If the sonnet-sequence as a whole was circulated in manuscript, it could therefore not have been put into circulation until shortly before Sidney's marriage to Frances Walsingham, which took place in 1583.

Sir Philip's marriage to Frances Walsingham naturally attracted attention. But it was Sidney's death, three years later, that really made Frances a poetic figure. The manner in which he met his death helped more than anything else to make Sidney the idol of England. He died like a Christian knight of the medieval romances;[38] a sort of halo encircled his death-chamber; and this halo reflected no little glory upon his wife, Frances. Although pregnant, she had hastened to her husband's bedside, and she remained his faithful nurse until the

[35] Cf. prefatory letter of this folio, reprinted by Feuillerat, *op. cit.* 1. 524.

[36] Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

[37] Cf. Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

[38] See the famous account of his romantic death in Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, *The Life of the Renowned Sr. Philip Sidney*, London, 1652.

end. On October 6, 1586, Sir Philip's uncle, Leicester, wrote to Walsingham:

. . . your sonne and mine is well amending as euer anie man hath done for soe short time. He feeleth noe greif now but his long lying, which he must suffer. His wife is with him. . . .[39]

And on October 25, he reported to Walsingham:

Your sorrowfull daughter and mine is here with me at Vtrickt, till she may recouer some strength, for she is wonderfully overthrowen thorow hir longe care since the beginning of her husbandes hurt, and I am the more carefull that she should be in some strength or she take her iourney into England, for that she is with child. . . .[40]

Two letters from Leicester to Walsingham, dated December 22 and December 23 respectively speak of Frances Sidney's being seriously ill.[41] Leicester's letter of October 25, quoted above, leaves no doubt that Frances Sidney's self-sacrificing care of her husband contributed to this illness.

That his wife's love and devotion was reciprocated by Sidney is shown in the will he made while awaiting death.[42] He bequeathed to her a life interest in all his "Manors, Lands, etc. etc." He also requested her to manage his various annuities to his servants, and then he added:

I pray mine executrix to be good, and to give so much Money, as to her Discretion shall seem good, to those mine old Servants, to whom by Name particularly I have given nothing to; referring it to her, as she shall think good.

After making many other bequests, he wrote:

The rest of my Goods, moveable and immoveable, and all my Chattels, I give and bequeath to my most dear and loving Wife, Dame *Frances Sydney*, whom I make my sole Executrix of this my last Will and Testament.

All this certainly gave contemporaries reason to consider Frances Sidney the true and faithful love of Sir Philip. It is as such that John Philip celebrates her in his *The Life and*

[39] Robert Dudley, Earl of Leycester, *Correspondence*, ed. J. Bruce, London, 1844, pp. 429-430.
[40] *Ibid.*, p. 446.
[41] *Ibid.*, pp. 480-481.
[42] Printed in Collins, *op. cit.*, 1 (first part). 109-113.

Death of Sir Philip Sidney, etc.,[43] published in 1587, the year of Sidney's funeral. In this poem, Sidney's spirit says:

> My spoused wife my Lady and my loue,
> Whilst life I had did know my tender hart.
> But God that rules the rowling skies aboue,
> Did thincke it meete we should againe depart.
> His will is done, death is my dew desart,
> She wants her make, I fro my deare am gon.
> She liues behind her louer true to morne.[44]

And later, when describing his own death, Sidney is made to say:

> My louing wife my Ladie and my deare
> With all my heart I bad for aye adue.[45]

In the eyes of contemporaries, Frances Sidney certainly was, at this time, the true and faithful love of Sir Philip. And since Sidney was celebrated as Astrophel, it was only natural that she should become Stella. I do not mean to imply that *Astrophel and Stella* was interpreted as an account of Philip's wooing of Frances. As I have indicated above, it was no doubt considered a conventional sonnet-sequence. But now that Sidney, Astrophel, was dead, it was only natural that the sonnets should be treated as a compliment to his widow, Frances Sidney.

II

The foregoing sections of this paper have attempted to demonstrate that after Sidney's death and before the publication of Sonnet 37 of *Astrophel and Stella* in 1598, Frances Sidney was considered the true love of Sir Philip, and that Sidney's sonnet-sequence was treated as a compliment to her. It is not to be expected then that the elegies written to honor the memory of Astrophel should call her Stella?

Let us now examine the *Astrophel Elegies*.[46] These elegies were published in 1595, three years before Sonnet 37.[47] The collection is dedicated " To the most beautifull and vertuous Ladie,

[43] Reprinted in the *Sidneiana* of the Roxburghe Club, London, 1837, pp. 18-31.
[44] *Ibid.*, p. 26. [45] *Ibid.*, p. 28.
[46] The text used is that of the one-volume Oxford *Spenser* (1924).
[47] The last three elegies in the collection had already been published in *The Phoenix Nest* in 1593.

the Countesse of Essex." Since the " Countesse " is the former Frances Sidney, it is only natural to expect that she, and not a rival of hers, will be celebrated in the poems dedicated to her.

Four of the elegies mention a Stella. *A Pastorall Aeglogue* gives her only the following two lines:

> Loe where engraued by his hand yet liues
> The name of *Stella,* in yonder bay tree.

An Elegie, or friends passion, while it devotes several stanzas to Stella, gives no indication as to who she is.

It is Spenser's elegy, *Astrophel,* that shows us that Stella is Frances Sidney. Astrophel was wooed by many maidens, Spenser tells us, yet,

> For one alone he cared, for one he sight,
> His lifes desire, and deare loues delight.
>
> *Stella* the faire, the fairest star in skie,
> As faire as *Venus* or the fairest faire:
> A fairer star saw neuer liuing eie,
> Shot her sharp pointed beames through purest aire.
> Her he did loue, her he alone did honor,
> His thoughts, his rimes, her songs were all vpon her.
>
> To her he vowd the seruice of his daies,
> On her he spent the riches of his wit:
> For her he made hymnes of immortall praise,
> Of onely her he sung, he thought, he writ.
> Her, and but her, of loue he worthie deemed,
> For all the rest but litle he esteemed.

Notice especially the expressions " for *one alone* he cared "; " her he did loue, *her* he *alone* did honor, his thoughts . . . were *all* vpon her "; " Of *onely her* he thought, he writ, her *and but her,* of loue he worthie deemed." Is it conceivable that Spenser would dedicate to a woman a poem in which he insisted with such vehemence that her late husband had deemed only another woman worthy of his love? Spenser is certainly referring to Lady Sidney when he writes of Stella in this poem.

Later in the poem, when Astrophel has been wounded in the thigh (Sidney was actually wounded in the thigh), shepherds find him.

> Tho (as he wild) vnto his loued lasse,
> His dearest loue him dolefully did beare, . . .

When Stella sees the wounded Astrophel,

> Her face, the fairest face, that eye mote see,
> She likewise did deforme like him to bee.
>
> Her yellow locks that shone so bright and long,
> As Sunny beames in fairest somers day
> She fiersly tore, and with outragious wrong
> From her red cheeks the roses rent away.
> And her faire brest the threasury of ioy,
> She spoyld thereof, and filled with annoy.

Stella then nurses him until his death. As we have seen above, Sidney when wounded, was transported to Arnheim, where he was faithfully nursed by Frances Sidney. The effect of this nursing on her health is indicated in Leicester's letter quoted above. Leicester reports that Frances is staying with him in Utrickt " till she may recouer some strength, for she is wonderfully overthrowen thorow hir longe care since the beginning of her husbandes hurt."

Later in the poem, when Astrophel has died, Stella's spirit

> . . . followed her make like Turtle chaste.
> To prove that death their hearts cannot diuide,
> Which liuing were in loue so firmly tide.

" Make " is Spenser's word for *mate, spouse*. And the " Turtle chaste " is the conventional symbol for *conjugal* fidelity. Spenser's Stella is certainly Frances Sidney.

The Mourning Muse of Thestylis, too, shows that Sidney's widow was meant by Stella. The passage devoted to Stella follows:

> Ah that thou hadst but heard his louely *Stella* plaine
> Her greeuous losse, or seene her heauie mourning cheere,
> While she with woe opprest, her sorrowes did vnfold. . . .
> She wroong her hands with paine,
> And piteously gan say, My true and faithfull pheere,
> Alas and woe is me, why should my fortune frowne
> On me thus frowardly to rob me of my ioy?
> What cruell enuious hand hath taken thee away,
> And with thee my content, my comfort and my stay?
> Thou onelie wast the ease of trouble and annoy:
> When they did me assaile, in thee my hopes did rest.
> Alas what now is left but grief, that night and day
> Afflicts this wofull life, and with continuall rage
> Torments ten thousand waies my miserable breast?

O greedie enuious heau'n what needed thee to haue
Enricht with such a Iewell this vnhappie age,
To take it back againe so soone? Alas when shall
Mine eies see ought that may content them, since thy graue
My onely treasure hides the ioyes of my poore hart?
As here with thee on earth I liv'd, euen so equall
Methinkes it were with thee in heau'n I did abide:
And as our troubles all we here on earth did part,
So reason would that there of thy most happie state
I had my share. Alas if thou my trustie guide
Were wont to be, how canst thou leaue me thus alone
In darknesse and astray; weake, wearie, desolate,
Plung'd in a world of woe, refusing for to take
Me with thee, to the place where thou art gone.

This is certainly the lament of a wife for her dead husband. Notice the expressions " my true and faithful pheere "; " my comfort and my stay "; " here with thee on earth I liv'd "; " our troubles all we here on earth did part "; " thou my trustie guide were wont to be." The Stella of this poem is certainly meant to be Frances Sidney.

It has been demonstrated, I believe, that the Stella of the *Astrophel Elegies* is not Lady Rich, as has generally been supposed, but Frances Sidney, née Walsingham, who was the Countess of Essex when the elegies were published. This identification is important for the interpretation of the *Astrophel Elegies,* but it is even more important for the interpretation of *Astrophel and Stella* and the so-called " Philip Sidney-Penelope Rich Affair." Mr. Sidney Lee [48] sees in the elegies proof that Sidney's love for Penelope was merely poetic, Mr. Jefferson B. Fletcher [49] uses them to show that it was merely Platonic, and Mr. Grosart [50] finds in them evidence that it was passionate. We now see that the theories of these gentlemen and others are invalid in so far as they rest upon evidence from the *Astrophel Elegies* because they are based upon a case of mistaken identity.

III

The previous sections of this study attempted to demonstrate that the Stella of *Astrophel and Stella* was not identified as Lady Rich before Sonnet 37 was published in 1598, and that the Stella of the *Astrophel Elegies* is not lady Rich, but

[48] *Op. cit.,* p. xliii. [49] *Op. cit.,* pp. 255-258. [50] *Op. cit.,* pp. lxvi-lxvii.

Sidney's widow. It does not follow, however, that " the Philip Sidney-Penelope Rich affair . . . is the recollection of the confused mind of a man writing a hundred years after Sidney's death," as Mr. Purcell would have us believe.

I have pointed out that the one-volume folio edition of Sidney's works appeared in 1598, three years after the publication of the *Astrophel Elegies*. It was published with the general title *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia*. In the *Astrophel and Stella* of this edition, Sonnet 37 appeared for the first time.

The appearance of this sonnet for the first time in the 1598 edition of the *Arcadia* raises many interesting questions which I shall not discuss here. Suffice it to say that the sonnet was apparently accepted by the public as the key to *Astrophel and Stella*, and that Lady Rich was thereafter generally recognized as the Stella of the sonnet-sequence.

The earliest extant evidence for this seems to be the dedicatory letter prefixed to the second book of the first (1603) edition of Florio's translation of Montaigne's *Essays*. The letter is addressed to Sidney's daughter Elizabeth (Countess of Rutland), and to Lady Rich. Florio writes:

TO THE RIGHT HO-norable and all-praise-worthie Ladies, *Elizabeth*, Countesse of Rutland, and Ladie Penelope Riche.

GIve me leave (peerlesse, and in all good gifts vnparagonized Ladies) though I make my fault double to aske leave for a fault, which I might leave; yet thus to paire you without dislike, who like (I imagine) each other above other, and to whom a like paire long may I seeke, but be long ere I find. Such pairing is no empairing, no disparaging, nor yet comparing, vnlesse in that good comparison of excellence. This is the number appropriate, at least reciprocall, of true love (Mont. l. i. c. 27) : as the two Tables comprised in two commandements of due love. . . . [Florio then praises Montaigne highly and continues:] His [Montaigne's] worth then being so eminent, his wit so excelent, his inventions so rare, his elocutions so ravishing; nor are my pains mis-spent in translating, nor will your Honours pleasure and leasure be mis-placed mis-spent or mis-employed in perusing him. I know, nor this, nor any I have seen, or can conceive, in this or other language, can in aught be compared to that perfect-vnperfect *Arcadia*, which all the world yet weepes with you, that your all praise-exceeding father (his praise-succeeding Countesse) your worthy friend (friend-worthiest Lady) lived not to mend or end-it: since this end wee see of it, though at

first above all, now is not answerable to the precedents: and though it were much easier to mend out of an originall and well corrected copie, than to make-vp so much out of a most corrupt, yet see we more marring that was well, then mending what was amisse. And if not any principall invention, much lesse may any translation at second hand come neere it: yet as that *Worthie* did divinely even in French translating some part of that excellent *du Plessis*, and (as I have seene) the first septmaine of that Arch-Poet *du Bartas* (which good Ladies, be so good to all, as all this age may see, and after-ages honor) so though we much more meanely doe in meaner workes (for still I say none can anneare him) yet where our Protonotaries doe holde the chaire, let vs poore Secondaries not be thrust out of doores. Of this your Honourable goodnesse doth assure me, and for this, and much more, I must and ever shall avow my selfe *To your Honours obliged and devoted in all service,* IOHN FLORIO.[51]

Florio's translation was entered on the Stationers' Rolls in 1600, just two years after the publication of the 1598 *Arcadia*, in which the key-sonnet of *Astrophel and Stella* first appeared. Florio is no doubt referring to the 1598 folio when he writes to Sidney's daughter and to Lady Rich:

. . . all the world yet weepes with you, that your . . . father . . . [and] your . . . friend . . . lived not to mend or end-it: since this and wee see of it, though at first above all, now is not answerable to the precedents: and though it were much easier to mend out of an originall and well corrected copie, than to make-vp so much out of a most corrupt, yet we see more marring that was well, then mending what was amisse.

In modern English, the above passage from Florio's letter, would I believe, read about as follows:

All the world joins you, Sidney's daughter, and you, Lady Rich, in regretting that Sidney did not live to complete and correct his Works. For although the 1598 edition with the general title *Arcadia* seems superior to the early pirated publications at first glance, it really is not better than these. It ought to be easier to correct mistakes on the basis of an original and well-corrected manuscript than to make up a pirated edition out of a very corrupt manuscript. Yet, in the 1598 folio, we see more marring of what was well in the earlier editions than mending what was amiss in them.

[51] This letter appears on R2^{r}-R3^{r} of the Folger Library copy of *The Essayes of Montaigne* . . . done into English by Iohn Florio, London, 1603.

Since Florio is addressing Sidney's daughter and Lady Rich, does it not seem probable that when he speaks of seeing " more marring that was well, then mending what was amisse " he is regretting the fact that the 1598 folio published Sonnet 37?

That Florio recognizes Lady Rich as the Stella of Sidney's sonnets is shown by the sonnet which is appended to the dedicatory epistle.

To the Honorable-vertuous Ladie, La: Penelope Riche.

MAdame, to write of you, and doe you right,
What meane we, or what meanes to ayde meane might?
Since HE, who admirably did endite,
Entiteling you Perfections heire, Ioyes light,
Loves life, Lifes gemme, Vertues court, Heav'ns delight,
Natures chiefe worke, Fair'st booke, his Muses spright,
Heav'n on Earth, peerlesse Phoenix, *Phoebe* bright,
Yet said, he was to seeke, of you to write.
Vnlesse your selfe be of your selfe devising;
Or that another such you can inspire.
Inspire you can; but ô none such can be:
Your selfe as bright as your mid-day, as rising.
Yet, though we but repeate who would flie higher,
And though we but translate, take both in gree.

Il Candido.[52]

Professor Hudson [53] has reviewed the evidence for the identification of Stella by seventeenth-century writers. The evidence from Florio's *Montaigne,* Thomas Campion's *Umbra* (lines 313-321), and Tyndale's famous letter in Aubrey's *Lives* makes it certain that Lady Rich was identified as Sidney's Stella by some writers of that century; but, as Mr. Hudson has pointed out, other seventeenth-century writers identified Frances Sidney as Stella. Mr. Hudson has not succeeded, however, in showing that the writers of the seventeenth century had any evidence for their identifications other than the evidence we possess today, i. e. the internal evidence of *Astrophel and Stella* itself, and the evidence of the *Astrophel Elegies.*

[52] *Ibid.* [R4r]. Purcell (*op. cit.,* pp. 44 ff.) denies that this sonnet refers to Sidney. See however Hudson's reply (*op. cit.,* pp. 98 ff.).

[53] *Op. cit., passim.*

I have attempted to show that:

1. The romantic stories of the "Sir Philip Sidney-Penelope Rich Affair" have been based not upon external evidence, but upon the 1598 edition of *Astrophel and Stella* and upon the *Astrophel Elegies*.
2. The *Astrophel Elegies* celebrate Frances Sidney as Stella; hence they cannot be used as evidence for the Sidney-Rich story.
3. We have no evidence that Sidney's contemporaries regarded Lady Rich as Stella. After the publication of the 1598 *Astrophel and Stella*, to be sure, some seventeenth century writers identified Stella as Lady Rich, but others identified her as Frances Sidney. So far as we know, these identifications were based on the same evidence that is available today, that is, the internal evidence of *Astrophel and Stella* and the evidence of the *Astrophel Elegies*.

Scholars have pointed out that many of the sonnets of *Astrophel and Stella* are imitative or conventional while others are personal and passionate, and that the poems were obviously written at various times. That indicates, I believe, that the poems were written as individual poems or as small groups and not as parts of an autobiographical sonnet-sequence. That Sonnet 37 and probably other sonnets deal with Lady Rich seems to me beyond question. That does not indicate, however, that the sonnet-sequence is the story of a love affair between Sir Philip and Lady Penelope. As Miss Wilson has said, ". . . how far the story of Astrophel is the story of Philip Sidney is a matter on which different readers will pronounce with different degrees of assurance." [54] Let us insist, however, that, when pronouncements are made, they be made upon the basis of the only valid evidence available at present, that is, *internal* evidence.

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[54] *Op. cit.*, p. 169.

VITA

Walter George Friedrich was born in Knoxville, Tennessee, March 2, 1897. He was graduated from Indiana University with the B. A. degree in 1920. During the World War he served for a year as Second Lieutenant, Infantry, U. S. A. From 1920 to 1922 he was on the faculty of the Kentucky Military Institute as instructor in English and Military Tactics. The year 1922-23 he spent at Columbia University as instructor in extension and graduate student. He received the M. A. degree from Columbia in 1923. The following year he was instructor in German at the University of Rochester. From 1924 to 1929 he was assistant professor of French and German at the University of Maryland; during this time he was also a graduate student in English at The Johns Hopkins University. From 1929 to 1933 he served as instructor and assistant professor of English at the University of Pittsburgh. The year 1933-34 he spent in residence at The Johns Hopkins, where he received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English in June, 1934. Since 1934 he has been instructor in English at The Johns Hopkins.